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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE:

SUBJECT : General Carter's Conversation with Colonel Leo Geary,
2 August 1963

PARTICIPANTS: General Carter and Colonel Leo Geary

COPIES TO : DDCI

1. Colonel Geary had several points he wished to make of which the most important are the following:

a. Surfacing of the AF-12. Colonel Geary mentioned that there was a great deal of talk among senior and responsible individuals in the Pentagon about the desirability of surfacing the AF-12. Their desire to surface this aircraft results largely from an improper understanding of the whole problem of the A-12 and the other related aircraft. Some senior officers in the Air Force believe that as long as the "Agency has its fingers on the A-12" the AF-12 cannot be used. Colonel Geary feels very strongly that the DCI or the DDCI should approach Secretary McNamara to impress upon him the importance to all concerned of not surfacing the AF-12 for at least another year. There is a great deal of specious reasoning in the Pentagon, Geary argues, to the effect that if the AF-12 were surfaced it would provide a good cover for the A-12. Colonel Geary feels that just the opposite is true; he says that as soon as someone informed about the aircraft industry learns that Kelly Johnson and Lockheed are developing an aircraft on a classified basis at the "site" it will immediately be assumed that this is the follow-on of the U-2 and would receive publicity as such. Even though the Soviets must have some inkling that the A-12 is being developed, they do not have an overt peg on which they can carry on a psychological campaign accusing the Americans of having a new and better U-2. Colonel Geary said that he personally

would see nothing wrong in an Air Force cover story to the effect that the AF-12 was a new long-range interceptor, as long as there was no mention of it being developed on a classified basis by Lockheed. Colonel Geary also mentioned that he thought we should brief certain leaders in the aircraft business about OXCART and solicit their help in keeping its existence secret as long as possible. Most leaders in the aircraft business, he says, know that something is up, and we stand to gain more by asking for their help than by trying to pull the wool over their eyes. But the main point that Colonel Geary wished to make is that Secretary McNamara should be asked to put a stop to the talk in the Pentagon about surfacing the AF-12.

b. The Agency's Need for More A-12s. Colonel Geary feels strongly that the Agency should ask for the five additional A-12s owned by the Air Force, and he believes that the Air Force would be willing to let the Agency have them. Colonel Geary reasons this way: If three of our present A-12 aircraft are "in tests", the total of useable aircraft is down to six. If 70% of these are in commission, and this is optimistic, the total of useable aircraft is down to four. If there are heavy requirements for these aircraft, the job cannot be done with this number. Therefore, the Agency should get hold of the additional Air Force planes so they will be able to do the job that is expected.

c. Rotation of Key Individuals [redacted] The third point that Colonel Geary wished to make is that the Agency should develop plans now to rotate the key people [redacted] The reason for this is that the key people will finish their three-year tour in about another year so there will be no continuity where it is needed most. Even though each of the key men would probably be willing to extend, it is probably not a good idea to prolong their tours without their families, etc. A good solution would be to replace one of the key men in advance of the regular rotation and bring in a man who will be experienced by the time the others are ready to rotate. 25X1

Marshall S. Carter
Lieutenant General, USA

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